

U.S. EPA REGION 5 REGIONAL TRIBAL OPERATIONS COMMITTEE CHARTER

Section 1: Mission

Consistent with the U.S. EPA Indian Policy of 1984 and the Browner Action Memorandum of 1994, the mission of the Region 5 Regional Tribal Operations Committee (RTOC) is to:

- promote the protection of public health and the environment in Indian Country;
- review and comment on regional environmental strategies on issues of importance to tribes;
- communicate environmental problems and needs of the tribes;
- interact with the National Tribal Operations Committee (NTOC), Region 5, and the tribes on relevant environmental issues;
- assist Region 5 to meet its trust responsibility through enhancing responsiveness to tribal needs and tribal access to U.S. EPA programs, funding, technical assistance, training, and information.

The purpose of the RTOC is not to replace the Agency's responsibility for consultation on a government-to-government basis.

Section 2: Goals

The goal of the RTOC is to form a partnership of tribal and U.S. EPA Region 5 representatives that can work cooperatively to:

- resolve specific program issues concerning environmental protection in Indian Country;
- discuss and develop policies to advance environmental protection on Region 5 Indian reservations;
- discuss national and regional budgetary issues that relate to environmental protection in Indian Country.

Section 3: Roles and Responsibilities

Tribal representatives to the RTOC should obtain input on the agenda items and other significant issues from the tribes in their respective state, prior to the RTOC meeting. There is an expectation that tribal representatives to the RTOC will interact with the tribes in their state on issues raised at the RTOC meetings. Region 5 recognizes that the tribes in each respective state may determine additional roles and/or responsibilities for their representatives to the RTOC.

Region 5 will be responsible for the logistics of the meetings and distribution of meeting notes following each RTOC meeting. Region 5 will maintain an RTOC Tracking System to record progress and/or status of issues raised during the RTOC meetings. Copies of the RTOC tracking Matrix will be distributed with the RTOC meeting agenda.

Section 4: Membership

A. Tribal Representatives

The tribes in Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin will be asked to designate two representatives for each state, to serve as the 6 tribal members of the RTOC. At the beginning of each fiscal year, Region 5 will request that the tribes verify their representatives. As resources allow, Region 5 will provide funding to reimburse travel costs for each tribal representative. Other tribal officials are welcome to attend the meetings.

Region 5 members to the National Tribal Operations Committee (NTOC) will be selected by the Midwest Alliance of Sovereign Tribes (MAST). Tribal representatives to the RTOC may serve as NTOC members if selected. Tribes that are not members of MAST will be contacted separately by the American Indian Program Manager (AIPM) for their NTOC member selections.

B. U.S. EPA Region 5 Representatives

The following Region 5 staff are members of the RTOC:

Regional Administrator/Deputy RA	Assistant Regional Administrator for RMD
Office of Public Affairs, Director (as needed)	Office of Regional Counsel, Director
Air and Radiation Division, Director	Division of Superfund, Director
Water Division, Director	Great Lakes National Program Office, Dir
Indian Environmental Office, Director	Tribal Environmental Liaisons
American Indian Program Manager	
Waste, Pesticides & Toxics Division, Director	
Office of Strategic Environmental Analysis, Director (as needed)	

C. RTOC Co-Chairs

The RTOC will be co-chaired by the Regional Administrator and one tribal RTOC representative. The tribal co-chair will rotate every two years and will be selected by the tribal RTOC representatives.

Section 5: Meetings

A. Frequency, Schedule, and Location of Regular Meetings

The RTOC will meet once during each federal quarter. The meeting will be scheduled for 1:00-4:00 pm on the first Wednesday of the last month of each federal fiscal quarter (December, March, June, September). **Two meetings each year will be held on a Region 5 Indian Reservation, and will rotate among the three states.**

B. Agenda Development

Based on input from the RTOC tribal and U.S. EPA Region 5 representatives, the **Indian Environmental Office (IEO)** will develop a draft meeting agenda 2 weeks prior to the date of the meeting. The **IEO** will work with the Tribal Environmental Liaisons to distribute the draft agenda to all Region 5 tribes. RTOC members will be asked to review and provide comments on the agenda. The final agenda will be distributed at the meeting.

C. Meeting Minutes

The **IEO** will be responsible for compiling draft minutes from each RTOC meeting. Within 2 weeks of the meeting, the minutes will be distributed to all RTOC members, and to all Region 5 tribal chairs and tribal environmental contacts. Copies of the meeting minutes will also be forwarded to the regional inter-tribal organizations. The meeting minutes will be approved at the following RTOC meeting.

The names and telephone numbers of the tribal RTOC representatives will be included at the end of the meeting minutes. Tribal officials that have questions or comments related to the RTOC meeting are encouraged to contact their respective RTOC representatives.

D. RTOC Tracking System

The **IEO** will be responsible for maintaining an RTOC Tracking System, to follow commitments made at the RTOC meetings. Copies of the RTOC Tracking Matrix will be distributed with the meeting agenda.

Section 6: Communication

A. RTOC and the National Tribal Operations Committee (NTOC)

The AIPM will report on the NTOC proceedings at each RTOC meeting. NTOC agendas and meeting minutes will be provided to each RTOC member.

B. RTOC and the 5-Agency MOU Work Group

The AIPM will report on the proceedings of the 5-Agency MOU Work Group meetings at each RTOC meeting. Copies of the meeting notes from the 5-Agency MOU Work Group will be provided to each RTOC member.

Section 7: Certification

The U.S. EPA Region 5 Regional Tribal Operations Committee Charter was reviewed and agreed to by the members of Regional Tribal Operations Committee.

Co-Chair, Tribal Representative

Co-Chair, U.S. EPA Region 5